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*The Servian People, their Past Glory and their Destiny.* By Prince LAZAROVICH-HREBELIANOVICH, with the Collaboration of Princess LAZAROVICH-HREBELIANOVICH (ELEANOR CALHOUN). In two volumes. (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons. 1910. Pp. xvi, 742.)

ONE naturally welcomes the appearance of a book that attempts for the first time to present to English readers all sides of Servian life in both past and present. The first volume of this work takes up the geographical features of the lands inhabited by Serbs, economic, social, and religious conditions to-day, and the history of Servian institutions, civilization, literature, and art. The second volume deals with political history.

The execution of the work is less happy than the conception. The arrangement adopted, especially the separation of institutional from political history, involves a great deal of repetition. While the chapter on literature is hardly more than a wearisome catalogue of names, other parts of the book contain rather superfluous matter; one could especially dispense very well with the diffuse surveys of the history of Europe, Asia, and even America, which are scattered through the second volume.

The authors have in general utilized the latest researches of Servian scholars and avoided many of the errors common in Western works. They have, however, been distressingly careless. We are told, for example, on page 437 that "the Servian Ruler, Stephan Nemanya, at the head of a Servian army, finally freed Bulgaria from Byzantine sway", while on page 453 we learn that Nemanya aided the Bulgarians "in every way except by taking the field, which was precluded to him by the situation which arose". Then various doubtful or quite exploded theories are set forth with a great air of assurance; for instance the by no means commonly accepted theories of M. Zaborowski that the Slavs were autochthonous in the Balkan peninsula (pp. 3 ff.). Later we learn that the Slavs, having once got out of the Balkans, began to drift back there even before the Christian era from their seats on the Volga (p. 177)! The derivation of the word *Srb* (Servian) from *Sabor* (pp. 5 and 6) cannot possibly hold water. The statement that the Emperor Justinian was a Slav rests on evidence that has lost all weight since the researches of Bury (p. 430).

But what chiefly mars the book is the tendency to magnify the Servians at the expense of their neighbors and of historic truth, to gloss over the more unpleasant parts of the story, to accept views, however dubious and unsubstantiated, that reflect credit upon the nation, to assert continually the superiority of the Servians in one respect or another to all other peoples. The whole book is one long panegyric in an exalted tone that finally grows irritating. This tendency comes out in such statements as that no "war of greed or gain was ever undertaken by the Serb race" (p. 15), that the foundation of the monastery school of

Manassia was an anticipation by two hundred years of the French Academy (p. 366), that between 1450 and 1700 "all of the greater Turkish Grand Vizirs . . . were of the Serb race" (p. 367. The Kiuprilis, perhaps?). The tendency is most apparent, however, in the account of the great age of the Nemanids. It seems to the present reviewer that the book gives a quite perverted view of the state and society of this age, owing to the attempt to make Serbia out a "constitutional monarchy" resting on fundamentally democratic principles, when it is as clear as day that the state was aristocratic to the core, that its so-called "parliaments" were nothing but assemblies of nobles and clergy corresponding to the Magnum Concilium of Western kings, and that the cardinal weakness of this state lay in the concentration of political power and privilege in the hands of the nobility and the extreme degradation of the lower classes. The authors are absolutely wrong in declaring that for such crimes as murder, robbery, theft, etc., nobles and commoners were punished exactly alike; they omit the prime characteristic of the status of the so-called *Meropahs*, namely that this class was bound to the soil; and in regard to the lowest class of bondmen called *Otroki*, it is hardly fair to add to article XLIV. of Dušan's Code the statement, which is not found there, that these people could not be sold (p. 264). The authors are at particular pains to repeat frequently that "there is no document to show any trace of slavery, or that there ever existed in medieval Serbia any class of human beings treated as chattels to be bought and sold." Their *pièce de resistance* here is article XXI. of Dušan's Code which provides, they say, that "Whoever sells a Christian shall lose his hand and have his nose slit" (p. 267). It is curious that they have overlooked the most important part of this article, which is really directed only against those who sell Christians to *infidels*. Space forbids adducing further examples of this kind of procedure.

Finally, one is inclined to protest at the extraordinary liberties taken with proper names; so, for instance, we meet the Emperors "Mavrikios", "Manoilo", and "Yoannis V.", the apostle "Method", "Khenghis-Khan", etc. (pp. 266, 447, 480, 342, and 429).

With all its defects the book will be useful if it arouses a wider interest in a heroic and unfortunate nation, and especially if it calls the attention of Western scholars to that curious medieval Serbia, which, with its Byzantinized court, administration, and church, and its semi-feudal aristocracy, annual diets, local self-government, jury system, etc., offers so unique an amalgam of Eastern and Western institutions.

R. H. LORD.

*The Political History of England.* Edited by WILLIAM HUNT, D.Litt., and REGINALD L. POOLE, M.A., LL.D. Volume VI. *The History of England from the Accession of Edward VI. to the Death of Elizabeth (1547-1603).* By A. F. POLLARD, M.A., Fellow of All Souls College, Oxford, Professor of English His-